

EXHIBIT 1-A

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7 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
8 NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
9 SAN JOSE DIVISION

10 SASA MASLIC, ET AL. : Case No. 5:21-cv-02556-BLF
11 :
12 Plaintiffs,:
13 :
14 vs. :
15 :
16 ISM VUZEM D.O.O. et al. :
17 :
18 Defendants.:
19 -----

20 Zoom videoconference deposition of SASA
21 MASLIC, a plaintiff herein, taken by the defendants as
22 upon cross examination, pursuant to the Federal Rules of
23 Civil Procedure and pursuant to Notice of Deposition and
24 agreement by counsel as to the time and place and
25 stipulations hereinafter set forth, at 10:30 a.m. on
 Monday, March 25, 2024, before Darlene Anthony, a
 Professional Reporter and Notary Public in and for the
 State of Ohio at large.

1 | (Interpreter translates.)

2 | BY MR. BERNAY:

3 Q You can answer, Mr. Maslic.

4 A What did Tesla cause? Is that the
5 question?

6 Q What did Tesla do to you to cause you
7 harm?

8 (Interpreter translates.)

9 MR. DRESSER: Same objections.

10 (Interpreter translates.)

11 BY MR. BERNAY:

12 Q You can answer, Mr. Maslic.

13 A In my opinion, Tesla is at fault

14 because their supervisors would go past us every

single day and they were able to notice all of these

irregularities and they never did anything. So in

17 my opinion, it is really the fault of the Tesla

18 supervisors.

19 Q And what were the irregularities that
20 they were noticing -- or that they were not
21 noticing?

22 (Interpreter translates.)

23 MR. DRESSER: Objection. The
24 question is both compound and contrary to the
25 witness' prior testimony.

1 MR. DRESSER: Do you, Mr. Bernay,
2 need to have the court reporter read back his last
3 answer so you can hear better?

4 (Interpreter translates.)

5 MR. BERNAY: Bill, first of all, you
6 need to stop it with the speaking objections.

7 MR. DRESSER: No, you can have the
8 court reporter read the transcript back.

9 (Interpreter translates.)

10 MR. BERNAY: Bill, what I'm saying is
11 this is an interactive deposition. State your
12 objections succinctly and then let your witness
13 answer the question.

14 (Interpreter translates.)

15 MR. DRESSER: Mr. Bernay, you are
16 aware that it is improper to ask a question that you
17 know does not have an answer to it as you have
18 phrased it.

19 (Interpreter translates.)

20 MR. DRESSER: I assume it's a
21 violation of the rules of professional conduct for
22 every state and for every jurisdiction that you
23 practice as a lawyer.

24 (Interpreter translates.)

25 MR. DRESSER: So ask a question and

1 don't put false words into the witness' mouth, or I
2 will ask for this deposition to be terminated if you
3 insist on doing that.

4 (Interpreter translates.)

5 MR. BERNAY: I'm going to say one
6 more thing so as not to waste anymore time. Bill, I
7 let you take your deposition last Tuesday. I know
8 Mr. Goellner has let you take your depositions. Let
9 me take mine.

10 (Interpreter translates.)

11 BY MR. BERNAY:

12 Q All right. Mr. Maslic, I'm going to
13 ask the question again. What were the
14 irregularities that you allege occurred at Tesla's
15 factory?

16 A So first, number one, Tesla
17 supervisors saw that we were pulling by hand these
18 air conditioning units that were two to three
19 hundred kilograms heavy and we were pulling them
20 behind us by hand and -- this heavy burden.

21 So there were some other devices that
22 were pulling up iron covers, and they could have
23 used those same types of devices to also help us
24 with these air conditioning units but they didn't.
25 May I continue?

1 So what I'm talking about is about
2 200 to 300 square meters of iron -- like rebar but
3 horizontal. It's like a roof, and we had -- we had
4 to first put that up, and then on top of that roof,
5 this iron roof, we would put the air conditioning
6 units on top of those. And it's a large area of 200
7 to 300 square meters. May I continue?

8 Q Yes.

9 A These are the most difficult types of
10 work assignments. All they could have done is use a
11 very small machine to help us lift these heavy air
12 conditioning units. May I continue?

13 (Mr. Bernay nods affirmatively.)

14 A Next, I don't know how much you're
15 familiar with Tesla's company, sir, plant, sir, but
16 there were some old pipes that was -- that were used
17 for acids that were part of the manufacturing
18 process, and we were asked to cut those without any
19 kind of protective gear. No protective suits, no
20 gloves, nothing. May I continue?

21 Q Yes.

22 A So these pipes, they were about one
23 meter in diameter and they were all used to
24 transport acid and they were all coming from this
25 old factory, and we had to cut them by hand without

1 any protective gear. May I continue?

2 Q Yes.

3 A So the Tesla safety officer would
4 sometimes warn me if I didn't have protective
5 goggles on. However, he did not {sic} see me
6 cutting pipes without a mask, without protective
7 suits, and without gloves.

8 So we would get warnings if we didn't
9 have the safety goggles on or maybe a safety vest,
10 but then we were not given special equipment and
11 special machinery to do the heavy work, even though
12 the supervisor saw us do it.

13 And if I might add one more thing,
14 sir? While I was doing the employment process with
15 ISM Vuzem, I had to undergo a special medical
16 examination for the United States, and at that point
17 the doctor found absolutely nothing wrong with me
18 except for having some artificial teeth. But there
19 was nothing wrong with my hips. There was nothing
20 wrong with my blood. There was nothing wrong with
21 anything else. May I continue?

22 So you may also consult my entry
23 records that I had to do every day when I entered
24 the workplace at Tesla, and I had six assignments
25 with Tesla, three months each. I did not take a

1 single day of break, a single sick day, until I was
2 squashed by this machine.

3 So you can check my check-ins and
4 check-outs at the Tesla plant, because we had to
5 check in and check out every day, and you will see
6 that I worked 12 hour days with two 15 minute breaks
7 and -- until I couldn't work anymore.

8 MR. DRESSER: Mr. Maslic, try to
9 stick to the question asked, which was what things
10 were irregular at the Tesla plant.

11 (Interpreter translates.)

12 A So I would say the irregularity was
13 that the supervisor pretended not to see. Tesla's
14 supervisor, that is.

15 Q Mr. Maslic, if the amount of hours
16 that you worked at Tesla's facility was an issue,
17 why did you accept successive assignments?

18 A Because I had to work. So there were
19 incredible and very heavy flooding in Bosnia in
20 2014, and we had lost everything during those
21 floods. So every man has to work to support his
22 family. I have a wife and two children that I was
23 trying to put through school, so I had to work.

24 Q Why didn't you take a job in Bosnia
25 instead of return to the United States each time?

1 A I don't see the reason for this
2 question.

3 Q Mr. Maslic, I'm asking if the working
4 conditions for Vuzem at Tesla were a problem, why
5 didn't you take another job?

6 A Because in Bosnia Herzegovina you
7 couldn't make more than \$200.

8 Q Is that \$200 a month?

9 A Yes, per month. Right now the
10 salaries for workers is about 250 euros a month.

11 Q And in 2014 what was it?

12 A About 400 convertible marks. That
13 would be around 200, \$250.

14 Q Who is Elon Musk?

15 THE INTERPRETER: Do you mind
16 repeating? Who is --

17 Q Yes, sorry, who is Elon Musk?

18 A The owner of Tesla.

19 Q Did Elon Musk do anything to harm
20 you?

21 A Directly? No.

22 Q What about indirectly?

23 A I will repeat again. The supervisors
24 were pretending not to see things that they should
25 have seen and things that they were paid to do.

1 Q So when you were working in Germany
2 for Ritgers, were you an employee of Pro-Klima?

3 A Yes. Yes.

4 Q So this entire experience with
5 Pro-Klima and Ritgers, did it last about six months?

6 A Yes. He wasn't doing very well
7 financially so it was stopped.

8 Q Throughout -- throughout this time,
9 so beginning after the war and through 2014, did
10 your car wash continue to operate that entire time?

11 A No. No, it did not.

12 Q When did the car wash cease
13 operations?

14 A When I started working at Pro-Klima.

15 Q And did you ever, after you worked
16 for Pro-Klima, did you ever operate the car wash
17 again?

18 A No, not anymore.

19 Q How did you come to be employed by
20 ISM Vuzem in 2014?

21 A So during the flooding, my wife
22 basically had a nervous breakdown, and I told her
23 please don't worry. I opened up the internet. I
24 searched for companies. I found this one and I sent
25 in my CV.

1 Q Did you know anyone at the time you
2 applied who also worked for ISM Vuzem?

3 A No. I know of Vuzem because I found
4 them on the internet, and I saw that they were
5 looking for workers.

6 Q Do you recall what internet site had
7 a job listing for ISM Vuzem?

8 A I have no idea. We had the floods.
9 I had lost everything. All we had -- all we had --
10 were able to save was whatever was in the attic.

11 Q So you applied for this job at ISM
12 Vuzem. What happened next?

13 A So I sent in my CV. I talked to a
14 woman called Natalija Kokot. That's N-a-t-a-l-i-
15 j-a, last name K-o-k-o-t. I went in for an
16 interview. I had all my diplomas, certified,
17 nostrified, and that was that.

18 Q And what job did you apply for at ISM
19 Vuzem?

20 A So he was interested in my -- in the
21 certificates -- my certificates that have to do with
22 large cooling systems, and he could use these -- my
23 certificates to get me a visa. But he was also able
24 to, based on my certificates, submit offers for
25 larger jobs that needed this kind of expertise.

1 Q When you say that he was interested
2 in your certificates, who is he?

3 A The owner of Vuzem, Mr. Vuzem. And I
4 talked to him personally about the job.

5 Q Do you recall Mr. Vuzem's first name?

6 A I think it's Robert. Not sure but I
7 think it's Robert.

8 Q When you first responded to the ad on
9 the internet, do you recall what the job description
10 was in the ad that you answered?

11 A No, I don't remember, but I do
12 remember that I was immediately invited for an
13 interview after they read my CV.

14 Q Where's the interview take place?

15 A In Zavrc. In their company, at Vuzem
16 headquarters.

17 Q And where is Vuzem headquarters?

18 A So the seat -- headquarters of the
19 company is in Zavrc. That is Z-a-v-r-c, and this is
20 in Slovenia.

21 Q Do you recall the month and year that
22 you were interviewed by Mr. Vuzem?

23 A Right after the flood, so sometime in
24 2014. Don't -- I'm not 100 percent sure but I think
25 it was February, March of 2014.

1 if the medical examination confirms that I'm
2 100 percent healthy, then that he would give me a
3 job and that he was interested in sending me to the
4 United States.

5 Q Did he say anything else to you in
6 that initial interview?

7 A Then he told me that I have to -- so
8 if my medical examination comes back good, then I
9 would have to copy all of my paperwork, all of my
10 diplomas and certificates. I would have to certify
11 them with Apostille, and then I would have to pay
12 for all of that paperwork. And he would, in
13 Slovenia, take care of my visa.

14 Q Did he tell you where you would be
15 working in the United States?

16 A He didn't tell me anything. He just
17 said when and if I get an American visa that I would
18 be going to the United States, but he didn't say
19 where. And there were also some additional,
20 obviously, checks being done by the American embassy
21 in Slovenia.

22 Q Did he tell you how much you would be
23 paid per month with this job?

24 A So when I first started working, I
25 was receiving 560 euros, and then later -- and then

1 later it was 760.

2 Q When did your salary jump up to 760
3 euros a month?

4 A Towards the end. So three, four,
5 maybe five months towards the end. Don't hold me --
6 I'm not 100 percent sure.

7 Q So Mr. Vuzem directed you to appear
8 for an exam at a clinic. Did that happen on the
9 same day as your interview or at some point later?

10 A No, this was a second time I came.

11 The second time I came I had to bring him all of my
12 diplomas and certificates. I also had to bring him
13 all my passports showing the different visas that I
14 had at the time for Germany, Afghanistan and Italy.
15 And after that, after he saw them, then he sent me
16 to the medical examination.

17 Q You mentioned an Italian visa. Why
18 did you have an Italian visa?

19 A No, not an Italian visa. No, sorry,
20 not an Italian visa. I had a German visa, a
21 Slovenian visa, an Afghanistan and an American visa,
22 and those are all the visas that I had.

23 Q Did you have an American visa prior
24 to working for Vuzem?

25 A No.

1 Q Did you sign a contract to work for
2 Vuzem?

3 A When I have received the visa.
4 Q Do you recall when you received the
5 visa and signed a contract with Vuzem?

6 A So I only signed empty papers for
7 Vuzem. I never signed a contract. I only signed
8 four empty papers that had my name and my signature.

9 Q When you say that you signed empty
10 papers, are you saying that you signed documents
11 that were blank?

12 A Yes, an empty piece of paper, sheet
13 of paper.

14 Q You never signed a formal employment
15 agreement with Vuzem.

16 A No.

17 Q Before you left on your first
18 assignment in the United States, which -- was that
19 around June 2014? Does that sound right?

20 A Yes. BMW Industries in Greenville in
21 South Carolina. June 2014.

22 Q Were you paid a monthly salary by
23 Vuzem prior to your departure?

24 A No.

25 Q In between your time in the United

1 States for Vuzem, meaning your trips, were you paid
2 by Vuzem for the time that you were back in eastern
3 Europe?

4 A When I was home, he did not pay me.

5 Q But you were -- just to be clear, you
6 were only paid by Vuzem when you were at a job in
7 the United States. Is that correct?

8 A Yes. So it takes me about six or
9 seven hours to travel from my home to Vuzem
10 headquarters. It takes about 12 hours to fly. I
11 was never paid anything unless I was entering Tesla,
12 and the moment I would leave I would also not be
13 paid. And if I ever happen to be sick, that day I
14 would also not be paid, even if I was in the states.

15 Q Did you pay for your travel to and
16 from the United States?

17 A No.

18 Q Who paid for your travel?

19 A The company probably paid. I don't
20 know exactly who paid, but I received the tickets
21 from the company.

22 Q Did you pay for your lodging in the
23 United States?

24 A No, the company paid for it.

25 Q Did you receive a per diem when you

1 were in the United States?

2 A No.

Q Do you know what I mean by per diem?

4 A What?

5 Q Did you receive a small amount of

6 money, either daily or weekly, from the company,

7 from Vuzem, to spend on groceries or other things?

8 A Our supervisor, we could get \$100,

9 for example, from him, but then that would be taken
10 out of our wages.

Q Besides your airfare and your

12 lodging, what else did Vuzem pay for while you were
13 in the United States?

14 A So they paid for transportation, they
15 paid for gas, they paid for electricity, water. So
16 any kind of utilities to do with the housing they
17 paid for.

18 Q When you were on assignment with

19 Vuzem in the United States, what did you pay for?

20 A Nothing. Only my food.

21 MR. BERNAY: We're at a good stopping
22 point now. We've been going a little over an hour,
23 so let's give everybody a break. Let's go off the
24 record.

(An off-the-record discussion was held)

1 A If there had been no flood, I would
2 have never left Bosnia Herzegovina, but I was left
3 with nothing to make my living on which is what
4 forced me to leave Bosnia and go to the European
5 union.

6 Q When you worked in Germany for
7 Pro-Klima, you took that job on your own free will.
8 Is that correct?

9 A Yes. Yes.

10 Q No one forced you to take the job in
11 Germany.

12 A No.

13 Q And no one forced you to take this
14 job in Slovenia with ISM Vuzem, correct?

15 A No.

16 Q So your inability to continue to work
17 as an air conditioning technician was due to the
18 fact that you lost all of your tools and car and
19 most of your home? Is that why?

20 A Yes.

21 Q After the flood in 2014 and 2015, was
22 there still a need for air conditioning work in
23 Bosnia?

24 A Yes, but like me, everybody else also
25 lost their equipment, and so I couldn't financially

1 recuperate, which is why I looked for the job.

2 Q When you were working as an air
3 conditioning technician, did you purchase the air
4 conditioning units themselves to sell to your
5 customers?

6 A There were some chains that were
7 selling the AC units and they would deliver the
8 units. I was just charging for my labor.

9 Q So to be clear, you weren't -- the
10 customers were purchasing the units and you were
11 installing them and charging the customer for your
12 labor.

13 A Yes. At the recommendation of the
14 shopping chains and the sellers of these units.

15 Q As part of your job as a technician,
16 did you have to carry heavy loads, like the unit
17 itself?

18 A No, there was a piece of equipment,
19 machinery, that would lift them. And it was -- if
20 it was higher, if it was higher, then there would be
21 a special truck that would have a lifting mechanism.
22 Nobody carries these heavy loads anymore. And also,
23 just to clarify, the hiring of this special truck
24 with the lifting mechanism would not be something
25 that I would charge the customer for. This would be

1 my son was born in '95 so he's 28, turning 29.

2 Q And after the flood, what education
3 were you trying to obtain for your children?

4 A So my daughter is a -- went to the
5 vocational medical high school, so she's a medical
6 technician. And my son went to hair dressing
7 academy. And their education was the only reason
8 for me to persevere and make it in the United
9 States.

10 Q Why did you need to work in the
11 United States to support their education?

12 A Because in Bosnia everything was
13 lost, all the companies in the floods. And I did
14 not have two or three months to not -- I couldn't
15 afford to not work for two or three months.

16 Q Their education cost money?

17 A Yes, of course. Every private
18 academy cost money.

19 Q So I understand, your children, their
20 high school technical education cost money?

21 A So the medical high school cannot be
22 completed without 20,000 because it's located in
23 another city.

24 Q Twenty thousand euro?

25 A Medical -- yes, the medical high

1 school. You know, lodging, food, travel, uniforms,
2 et cetera, et cetera.

3 Q And that's 20,000 euro a year?

4 A For four years.

5 Q And what about the hair dressing
6 academy?

7 A So we paid that 10,000 euros for one
8 year. This was a private hairdressers academy, and
9 thank God he completed it and today he's a
10 successful hairdresser.

11 Q Did insurance cover any of your
12 losses resulting from the flood?

13 A No. We only received 5,000
14 convertible marks, which is 500 euros from the
15 state. But everybody that was affected, all the
16 houses that were affected received that aid.

17 Q Did you have insurance on any of the
18 items, including your home that you lost?

19 A No, no.

20 Q So to get back to your applying for a
21 job with Vuzem, you said during your second trip you
22 went to see the doctor who performed an examination
23 on you, correct?

24 A No, it is not correct. That would
25 have been the seventh time I went. So the last time

1 I went, when I went to the doctor.

2 Q Your seventh trip to Slovenia.

3 A No, the seventh trip to the United
4 States. That's the first time I went to see a
5 doctor in the United States.

6 Q Okay. I'm sorry, I think we're -- I
7 may have confused you in terms of what I was talking
8 about.

9 A No, no, I'm not confused.

10 Q I'm asking about the time you were
11 evaluated prior to receiving a job at ISM Vuzem.
12 You said that was during your second trip to
13 Slovenia that you saw the company doctor.

14 A Yes. Yes.

15 Q And you testified that you had -- the
16 doctor found no issues with your health in 2014. Is
17 that correct?

18 A Yes, that is correct. He only found
19 an artificial bridge in my -- on my lower teeth, and
20 he entered that into my card.

21 Q How do you know that the physician
22 found no issues with your health? Did he tell you?

23 A So all the workers who were meant to
24 go to the United States had to undergo special
25 medical examinations. They looked at everything.

1 visa interview, where and in what city was that visa
2 interview held?

3 A In Ljubljana. L-j-u-b-l-j-a-n-a. In
4 the American embassy.

5 Q Did anyone prepare you for that
6 interview?

7 A No.

8 Q Do you recall what questions were
9 asked of you by the consular officer at the embassy?

10 A He asks normal questions, all the
11 normal questions about my life, my education, my
12 parents, the war, my occupations, where I worked,
13 who I work for, what I did. Also about all my
14 certificates and where I received them, and they
15 were a little bit surprised that I had all those
16 certificates.

17 Q After the interview, how long did it
18 take for you to receive your visa approval?

19 A Fifteen days.

20 Q And what visa did you receive?

21 A I don't know which one I got (holding
22 up passport).

23 MR. DRESSER: Hold it, Sasa. Put it
24 down. It has confidential information that is being
25 recorded. We don't do that.

1 issued an ID.

2 Q And the ID that you received, who
3 issued that ID?

4 A So at BMW plant we received this ID
5 with our picture, name, a full name, and there was
6 also a name under there and I'm assuming it was BMW
7 safety department. I don't know.

8 Q How many hours per day did you work
9 at the BMW plant, on average?

10 A Twelve.

11 Q And how many days per week, on
12 average, did you work?

13 A I was there on assignment 85 days and
14 I worked each and every day. On Sundays our working
15 hours were shorter and we would end at 4:00.

16 Q How many hours would you work on a
17 Sunday?

18 A So on Sundays I worked from 8:00 to
19 4:00, and then at the end of every month I would
20 have 230 to 240 hours worked. Any breaks that we
21 were given would be taken out of this total number
22 of hours worked. There was a 50 minute breakfast
23 break and a 30 minute lunch break, but those would
24 not be counted towards the hours worked. And this
25 was the case at the BMW plant and it was exactly the

1 same situation in the Tesla plant. Identical.

2 So the working conditions were
3 identical for the BMW plant and for Tesla. They
4 also didn't take into account our commute times both
5 to the work site and home. Those were not taken
6 into account neither at BMW or at Tesla.

7 Q Were you paid an hourly wage while at
8 BMW?

9 A I would just receive a certain
10 amount, flat rate, in my bank account monthly. I
11 could not choose how many hours to work. I had to
12 do what everybody else was doing.

13 Q When you worked for Vuzem at BMW, did
14 you ask for a day off?

15 A No, I couldn't get one.

16 Q How did you know you couldn't get
17 one?

18 A Because even my colleagues who were
19 sick were not getting paid if they were out sick.

20 Q And how did you know that your
21 colleagues who were out sick were not getting paid?

22 A We were talking about it amongst
23 ourselves, while we were having, you know, our lunch
24 or while we were smoking. May I add something?

25 Q Please.

1 whether the overseers were staying in houses, I
2 wouldn't be able to tell you that.

3 Q You said that you were shocked. What
4 were you shocked by?

5 A Well the relationship. The
6 relationship between the supervisors and the
7 workers. Also of my separation from home. This was
8 the first separation from home for me where I felt
9 uncomfortable.

10 Q And what made you feel uncomfortable
11 about being separated from home?

12 A So when I started experiencing these
13 uncomfortable situations, I immediately, maybe my
14 first, second, third, or fourth day went to the
15 boss' son, Klemen, to complain. And I thought this
16 was a large, healthy company, and I thought
17 interpersonal relationships were very important.
18 There was a problem because of my ethnicity, because
19 of the fact that I was from Bosnia. And there I was
20 complaining to my boss' son, and he laughed at me.

21 Q What, specifically, was your
22 complaint to Klemen Vuzem that day?

23 A So when I was talking to his father,
24 I was discussing specialized work, but because I was
25 a Serb from Bosnia Herzegovina, I got the worst and

1 the most difficult job assignments.

2 Q What were the better job assignments
3 at BMW?

4 A Well probably the jobs that I thought
5 I was hired for. Air conditioning, vents, venting,
6 stuff like that.

7 Q Did other workers at -- did other
8 workers in Greenville do those jobs, like the air
9 conditioning and the venting?

10 A Air conditioning jobs, no, but
11 ventilation jobs, yes. But those were only given to
12 workers that had a privileged relationship with the
13 Vuzem supervisors.

14 Q Who did the air conditioning work, if
15 any?

16 A Not our company. Also, at Tesla it
17 was an American company who did all the air
18 conditioning work, not the Slovenian company.

19 Q What were the names of the workers
20 who were given these preferential jobs, like the
21 vents?

22 A So these would be people that were
23 close to Vuzem. Their family, their friends, their
24 cousins. They would be mostly people from Zagorje.
25 Spelling: Z-a-g-o-r-j-e, in northwestern Croatia,

1 but I didn't think that was normal.

2 Q How do you know then that these
3 individuals associated with Vuzem took drugs?

4 A I know by how they showed up at work.
5 The supervisors only. Klemen was the worst but also
6 Josip Liber.

7 Q And what about how they showed up at
8 work led you to believe that they were on drugs?

9 A So I could more tell about the amount
10 of alcohol they were drinking. You're asking me
11 some questions that I just really wasn't paying
12 attention to it. I was just trying to get out of
13 their way so they wouldn't hurt me.

14 Q What do you mean by that, you were
15 trying to get out of their way so they would not
16 hurt you?

17 A Because they were very evil.

18 Q Who was very evil?

19 A So I gave you the names: Klemen,
20 Josip Liber, Sifet Dizdarevic. Those three names
21 will suffice.

22 Q And why were they evil? Because they
23 discriminated against you as a Bosnian Serb?

24 A Yes.

25 Q Any other reasons?

1 Q Did these two individuals also
2 experience discrimination by Klemen Vuzem and
3 others?

4 A No.

5 Q Why not?

6 A They probably kept quiet. I did not
7 keep quiet. I stated my opinion.

8 Q Did -- while you were in Greenville,
9 did any one of the Vuzem workers leave early because
10 of the conditions there?

11 A I don't know. I asked Klemen if I
12 could leave. But his answer was that they will take
13 away my visa, that they will make me pay for my
14 transportation and my accommodations. That they
15 will destroy my reputation. And that, as a
16 consequence of that, I will never be able to work in
17 the European union again.

18 Q And when did you ask Mr. Vuzem that
19 question and receive that response?

20 A Maybe between the 10th and the 15th
21 day of my arrival at Greenville, so at the very
22 beginning.

23 Q And Mr. Vuzem's response was to a
24 question from you about returning home to Bosnia?

25 A Yes.

1 Q Did you ask again after that?

2 A No. Another supervisor from Vuzem

3 put me under his protection. He put me under him

4 and into his team, and his name is Aljosa Globelnik.

5 Q Why did Mr. Globelnik put you under
6 his protection?

7 A Because he saw that I do my job well.
8 I just wouldn't allow anybody to provoke me, to make
9 fun of me and to insult me, especially because of my
10 ethnicity.

11 Q Once you came under Mr. Globelnik's
12 protection, did you have any further conversations
13 with Klemen Vuzem?

14 A No, I never addressed him again.

15 Q Was Klemen Vuzem there the entire
16 time that you were in Greenville?

17 A Yes.

18 Q Did you work in unsafe conditions at
19 BMW?

20 A Sometimes. These can't be ideal,
21 always.

22 Q What were those unsafe work
23 conditions?

24 A So when we're working on the roof, we
25 didn't have appropriate cranes or jacks, so we had

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7

8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
9 SAN JOSE DIVISION
- - -

10 SASA MASLIC, ET AL. : Case No. 5:21-cv-02556-BLF
11 :
Plaintiffs, : Volume II
12 :
vs. :
13 :
ISM VUZEM D.O.O. et al. :
14 :
Defendants.:
15 - - -

16 Continued Zoom videoconference deposition of
17 SASA MASLIC, a plaintiff herein, taken by the defendants
18 as upon cross examination, pursuant to the Federal Rules
19 of Civil Procedure and pursuant to Notice of Deposition
20 and agreement by counsel as to the time and place and
21 stipulations hereinafter set forth, at 10:34 a.m. on
22 Tuesday, March 26, 2024, before Darlene Anthony, a
23 Professional Reporter and Notary Public in and for the
24 State of Ohio at large.
25

(Interpreter translates.)

Q You can answer.

3 A Mr. Bernay, I only spent one of my
4 assignments at the BMW plant. All my other
5 assignments I did at Tesla.

Q My question was, while you were working in Greenville, how often did the company organize dinners for the workers?

9 A I'll say once -- I'll say once, but
10 I'm not sure. Simply, I'm not sure.

11 MR. DRESSER: Sasa, just answer the
12 question, okay?

13 | (Interpreter translates.)

14 MR. DRESSER: If he wants to waste
15 his time on things that aren't relevant, that's his
16 issue.

17 A Okay, Mr. Bill.

18 Q When you lived in Greenville, did you
19 have any expenses besides your groceries?

20 A No.

21 Q When you were in Greenville, how did
22 you communicate with your family in Bosnia?

23 A Via phone.

24 Q Did you have a cell phone with you
25 when you worked in Greenville?

1 A Yes.

2 Q Was that your personal cell phone?

3 A Yes.

4 Q Was it a Bosnian cell phone or an
5 American cell phone?

6 A So the first assignment I had a
7 Bosnian cell phone. Later I bought myself an
8 American number.

9 Q Did you always have possession of
10 your cell phone when in Greenville?

11 A Yes.

12 Q Did -- during this time, in
13 Greenville in 2014, did you have any social media
14 accounts?

15 A Probably. Probably.

16 Q What social media accounts did you
17 use in 2014?

18 A I used Viber to communicate with my
19 family, and I probably had Facebook and Skype.

20 Q Besides Viber, Facebook, and Skype,
21 did you use any other social media platforms in
22 2014?

23 A No.

24 Q Do you still have a Facebook account
25 today?

1 A Yes, I do.

2 Q Have you searched your Facebook
3 timeline for relevant materials in this proceeding?

4 A No.

5 Q In -- when you were working for Vuzem
6 between 2014 and 2016, how often did you post to
7 Facebook?

8 A Rarely. Very rarely.

9 Q Do you recall, when you did post to
10 Facebook during this period, 2014 to 2016, what did
11 you post about?

12 (Interpreter translates.)

13 MR. DRESSER: Objection, calls for
14 speculation.

15 (Interpreter translates.)

16 Q You can answer.

17 A I don't know what I should remember.
18 This was eight years ago.

19 Q I've asked you about 2014. Thinking
20 about the entire time that you worked for Vuzem,
21 from 2014 to 2016, did you use any social media
22 platforms besides Viber, Facebook, and Skype?

23 A No.

24 Q We spoke yesterday about the working
25 conditions at BMW in Greenville. Besides Klemen

1 Vuzem, did you complain to anyone else about the
2 working conditions and hours at Greenville?

3 A No. Also, I was not complaining
4 about the working conditions. I was complaining
5 about the interpersonal relationships.

6 Q Did you tell anyone besides Klemen
7 Vuzem that you wanted to leave Greenville and return
8 to Bosnia?

9 (Interpreter translates.)

10 MR. DRESSER: Objection, compound.

11 (Interpreter translates.)

12 Q You can answer.

13 A I complained in front of all the
14 workers to Klemen. I was not afraid. And I said,
15 If we can't work it out, let me go back.

16 Q And what was Klemen Vuzem's response
17 to you, when you made this complaint?

18 A That I would lose my visa, that I
19 would bear the cost of the visa, of the transfer and
20 of my accommodations. That I would have to bear all
21 those costs. That I would lose my reputation, and
22 that I would not be able to work anywhere else
23 again.

24 Q Who else was present when Klemen
25 Vuzem told you these things?

1 A Esmir Kadric was there. First name
2 E-s-m-i-r, last name K-a-d-r-i-c. There were about
3 50 workers present because we were on a break.

4 Q After you made this complaint, did
5 any of the Vuzem workers speak to you about what you
6 said?

7 A Yes, my supervisor, Aljosa Globelnik.

8 Q And what did your supervisor say?
9 A That I would have no further
10 problems, that I would be working under him, and
11 after this conversation with Mr. Aljosa I had no
12 further issues in Greenville.

13 Q And apart from your conversation with
14 your supervisor, did anyone else discuss or comment
15 on your complaint to Klemen Vuzem?

16 A Yes, my work colleagues, but not in
17 front of Klemen Vuzem but on the side.

18 Q And what did your work colleagues say
19 about what you told Mr. Vuzem?

20 A That I was right, that what I did was
21 the right thing to do. I never allowed anybody to
22 underestimate me or to humiliate me.

23 Q When you worked for Vuzem in
24 Greenville, are you aware of any other complaints
25 made by the Vuzem workers to the supervisors?

1 A I believe this is a superfluous
2 question. I cannot speak on other people's
3 behalves.

4 Q I'm asking you, specifically, if
5 you're aware of other complaints made by other
6 workers while you were in Greenville.

7 A I don't know.

8 Q To be clear, you don't know or you
9 can't recall if there were other complaints?

10 A I don't know if anybody else
11 complained. I can't know what other workers did.
12 Mr. Bernay, if I might add?

13 Q Yes, please.

14 A So this was my first assignment, this
15 assignment at BMW. And I didn't -- I didn't find my
16 grounding there. I was far away from my family. I
17 left my family behind. And if -- I think if I
18 forgot something, that's normal, because I was 12 to
19 13,000 kilometers away from my home.

20 Q While working in Greenville, who
21 supplied your work equipment?

22 A We checked all that out in Slovenia.
23 We received it in Slovenia.

24 Q Did you have to pay for any of your
25 work equipment?

1 A For our winter jackets, yes.

2 Q Anything else?

3 A No.

4 Q And I assume you didn't need your
5 winter jackets in Greenville, South Carolina.

6 A No, we were supposed to go to
7 Chattanooga so we had to get these jackets that
8 could be appropriate for those subzero degrees, and
9 this was just one jacket.

10 Q Were you supposed to go to
11 Chattanooga for your first assignment?

12 A No, no.

13 Q This was a later assignment.

14 A That was later. But when you asked
15 about the purchases, I only had to purchase one
16 jacket, but I never went to Chattanooga.

17 Q When did you leave Greenville to
18 return to Bosnia?

19 A As soon as the minimum time frame
20 expired. That was 85 days. My visa stipulated I
21 could stay for six months but I only -- I always
22 only stayed the minimum number of days, which was
23 85.

24 Q Why did you only stay the minimum
25 number of days?

1 Q And this was Klemen Vuzem?

2 A Yes, he was the boss' son. Not me.

3 Q In that conversation, what did you
4 tell Klemen Vuzem about your departure plans?

5 A That I did not want to allow anybody
6 to underestimate me and to threaten me. I have been
7 that way. I have never kept quiet, and I wouldn't
8 allow anybody to stomp all over me. I have my
9 pride.

10 Q I'm asking a different question. My
11 question is how did you inform Klemen Vuzem that you
12 were returning to Bosnia? What did you tell him?

13 A I asked him to stop with the
14 provocations and that to return me. I didn't come
15 there for anybody to stomp all over me. I have
16 never allowed that.

17 Q What did Mr. Vuzem say in response?

18 A He laughed.

19 Q And then how did you go about
20 planning your return to Bosnia, meaning your flights
21 and your departure day?

22 A I didn't. I had to stay. I was
23 threatened again that I had to pay for everything:
24 My visa, my flight, my accommodations, the clothing.
25 Klemen said, Yes, you can return, but first you have

1 to pay for all this and we will calculate how much
2 you owe.

3 Q I want to be clear that we're not
4 talking about different conversations. Mr. Maslic,
5 you did leave -- you left Greenville after 85 days,
6 correct?

7 A Yes.

8 Q The conversation that you just
9 described, was that the conversation that you had
10 with Klemen Vuzem 10 to 15 days into your time at
11 Greenville?

12 A Yes.

13 Q I'm asking you about a different
14 period of time now. I'm asking you about early
15 September 2014 and late August 2014. At some point
16 you had to communicate with someone about your
17 departure from Greenville, correct?

18 A We came to Greenville as a group,
19 collectively, and we left Greenville as a group. I
20 didn't leave on my own. We came as a group and we
21 left as a group.

22 Q When you left Greenville, how many
23 other Vuzem workers left with you?

24 A Everybody who came left with me, and
25 then the next shift, the next contingent came.

1 Q Do you have any correspondence that
2 you received from ISM Vuzem with you today? Did you
3 save any of it?

4 A I don't understand the question.

5 Q Did you keep any of the
6 correspondence that you received from ISM Vuzem?

7 A Yes, that I was fired while being on
8 sick leave.

9 Q Anything else that you kept?

10 A I don't know.

11 Q When you were back in Bosnia after
12 Greenville for these 15 to 20 days, did you consider
13 leaving Vuzem's employment to take a different job?

14 A No, because there were no other jobs.
15 Floods have destroyed everything. You can open any
16 source of information and look for Samac and you
17 will see that the floods have destroyed everything.

18 Q Did you consider looking for jobs
19 elsewhere in Europe during that time?

20 A No, I was already a man of advanced
21 age and not too many people would hire me. And even
22 if I had quit, they would have destroyed my
23 reputation in the United States, in Europe, in
24 Germany. ISM is a German company and I would not
25 have been able to work anywhere else in Europe.

1 Q Let me understand that. Are you
2 saying, if you had quit when you were back in
3 Bosnia, Vuzem would have destroyed your reputation?

4 A Yes, and I would have had to pay all
5 of these expenses.

6 Q How do you know that you would have
7 had to pay all those expenses?

8 A Because Klemen Vuzem said it to my
9 face.

10 Q If I understand, Mr. Vuzem said that
11 to you because you had asked to leave early from
12 Greenville.

13 A Yes, but it also applied to me
14 resigning. I would have had to pay it all.

15 Q How do you know it would have applied
16 to you resigning after you returned to Bosnia?

17 A Because he told me that I would be
18 responsible for paying for my visa, for paying the
19 15 days that I spent in a hotel while waiting for
20 the visa because I couldn't return to Bosnia. I
21 didn't have my passport with me.

22 Q Again, Mr. Maslic, I'm asking, I
23 think, a different question than you understand me
24 to be asking. My question is, when you were back in
25 Bosnia in September 2014, if you had taken a

1 different job and not accepted another assignment
2 from Vuzem, what would have been the result?

3 A I don't know. I can't tell the
4 future.

5 MR. DRESSER: I was going to object,
6 it calls for speculation, but I believe the witness
7 already said that.

8 (Interpreter translates.)

9 Q Mr. Maslic, did anyone tell you that,
10 had you not accepted another assignment from Vuzem
11 when you were back in Bosnia, you would have had to
12 pay back all of these expenses and would have lost
13 your visa?

14 A Directly, no. Indirectly, yes.

15 Q What gave you that impression, that
16 if you had not accepted another assignment all of
17 these things, including reimbursements and losing
18 your visa, would have happened to you?

19 A The conversations with my work
20 colleagues while we were in Greenville. That's what
21 they were talking about. This was, after all, my
22 first assignment. I was getting to know everybody.
23 I was getting adjusted. And if I may add, I had to
24 return to the United States to work because my son
25 was attending the private hairdresser's academy. I

1 had to return to earn money to pay for his
2 education.

3 Q Did you want to go back to the United
4 States to work for Vuzem in 2014?

5 A I had no choice.

6 Q Mr. Maslic, you had a choice,
7 correct? You could have not gone.

8 MR. DRESSER: Objection,
9 argumentative.

10 (Interpreter translates.)

11 MR. DRESSER: You're not allowed to
12 tell the witness he's not allowed to answer the way
13 he did. That's what you're doing.

14 (Interpreter translates.)

15 MR. BERNAY: You are not allowed to
16 tell the witness how to answer in a speaking
17 objection.

18 (Interpreter translates.)

19 MR. DRESSER: Mr. Bernay, let's not
20 get into it. After the email that I got from you
21 yesterday at 4:30 indicating that whatever you said
22 this morning to Mr. Maslic was a bunch of nonsense,
23 I'm not going to get into it with you.

24 (Interpreter translates.)

25 MR. BERNAY: I'm not sure what you're

1 referencing, but Mr. Maslic --

2 MR. DRESSER: Want me to read it to
3 you?

4 (Interpreter translates.)

5 MR. BERNAY: Bill, if you want to
6 have a discussion, let's have it off the record.

7 MR. DRESSER: Seriously, do you want
8 me to read it to you?

9 MR. BERNAY: No.

10 MR. DRESSER: Then don't go there.

11 (Interpreter translates.)

12 Q Mr. Maslic, I'll ask the question
13 again. You voluntarily returned to the United
14 States in September 2014 to work at Tesla, correct?

15 A Yes.

16 Q Did -- tell me about your second
17 assignment at Tesla. When you arrived in
18 California, who picked you up at the airport?

19 A So it was organized. It was another
20 organized trip. We flew from Slovenia, maybe to
21 Germany, maybe through Switzerland, I'm not sure, to
22 the United States. And then I didn't know anybody
23 and these were supervisors that I didn't know.

24 Q Everyone else on your flight was a
25 supervisor?

1 A These were workers who were also
2 flying with me, and then we were greeted in the
3 United States. They were organized; I assume, Vuzem
4 vans that came to pick us up.

5 Q How many people traveled with you
6 from Slovenia to California?

7 A I don't know. I didn't count them.
8 That wasn't my job. Twenty, maybe 30. I can't give
9 you the correct number because it didn't interest
10 me.

11 Q And what were your living
12 accommodations like in California?

13 A Excellent.

14 Q Tell me more about what your living
15 situation was like.

16 (Interpreter translates.)

17 MR. DRESSER: Objection, calls for a
18 narrative. Object to the form of the question. To
19 say, Tell me about something, is an improper
20 question. If you have a specific question, please
21 ask it.

22 (Interpreter translates.)

23 Q Let me ask a different question.

24 Mr. Maslic, did you live in an apartment complex?

25 A We lived in houses.

1 there we were in a motel and here we were in a
2 house.

3 Q Did other ISM Vuzem workers live in
4 the same neighborhood with you?

5 A Yes.

6 Q Were there amenities in the
7 neighborhood, like a health club and swimming pool?

8 A Yes, for those who didn't work.

9 Q Did you ever use any of the amenities
10 on site?

11 A So in the one and a half years that I
12 was there, I may have gone to the pool once. The
13 rest of the time we would come home broken. We
14 would have to, you know, wash ourselves, cook, take
15 care of our clothing, rest, and so on.

16 Q Did your colleagues at Vuzem make use
17 of the amenities in California, like the swimming
18 pool and the health club?

19 (Interpreter translates.)

20 MR. DRESSER: Objection. Question is
21 ambiguous and compound.

22 (Interpreter translates.)

23 Q You can answer.

24 A Mr. Bernay, I wasn't following my
25 colleagues around. I had to wash my clothes. I

1 A I don't know but they probably were
2 not satisfied.

3 Q Did you talk to any of them about why
4 they left Vuzem?

5 A They were not satisfied with certain
6 conditions.

7 Q Do you know what those conditions
8 were?

9 A We didn't really delve into those
10 discussions but it was mostly the pay.

11 Q And they left the company in 2016?

12 A I wasn't paying attention to when
13 people were leaving the company, so I'm not sure.

14 Q Did your fellow workers that you knew
15 from Greenville and Fremont, did they leave the
16 company at different points in time, meaning they
17 would leave after an assignment and not come back?

18 A I don't know.

19 Q Did --

20 A May I add to my answer?

21 Q Please.

22 A So there are workers who only did one
23 assignment. There are those who did two or three.
24 I did seven. So when I speak for myself, I say I
25 did seven assignments.

1 Q And in terms of the workers who only
2 did one or two or three assignments, do you
3 understand that those workers left the company --
4 well, sorry. Strike that.

5 In terms of the workers who did only
6 one, two, or three assignments, do you understand if
7 they left the company because they were fired?

8 A I don't know that. I don't know.

9 Q When the workers who did less than
10 three assignments left the company, did they have to
11 pay their expenses back to the company?

12 A I don't know if they did or not.

13 Q Did you ever ask anyone who had left
14 the company if they had to pay back their expenses?

15 A No. These are all people who live
16 300, 400, 500 kilometers away from my home and I
17 don't run into them.

18 Q In terms of the gentlemen who live in
19 Bosnia, who you mentioned a few minutes ago, did any
20 of those workers have to repay their expenses to the
21 company after they left?

22 A I never talked to them about it. And
23 in the eight years, I've only met certain people
24 once, maybe twice.

25 Q Who did you meet since you left the

1 I believe you testified yesterday
2 that Mr. Liber discriminated against you while
3 working in Greenville. Is that correct?

4 A Yes.

5 Q Did that behavior continue at Tesla?

6 A Yes, but to a lesser degree.

7 Q When you say it did continue to a
8 lesser degree, how did Mr. Liber discriminate
9 against you while you were working at Tesla?

10 A Well, from the jobs I received, I
11 received the worst and the most difficult jobs. He
12 would pull me out of the group that was assigned to
13 Aljosa and then give me the dirtiest, the worst, and
14 the most difficult job assignments.

15 Q What would be an example of one of
16 those terrible job assignments?

17 A Yes, I can give you an example.

18 Q Please.

19 A Just one second. So for example, one
20 of the hardest, most difficult and most risky jobs
21 were taking off the old installation from pipes for
22 waste, acid, and waste water.

23 Q And that was an assignment that
24 Mr. Liber gave you?

25 A Yes. So -- yes, he did. And this

1 would be, so taking off the old installation from
2 these -- for acid and waste water because that was
3 all going to get replaced with the new installation.

4 Q What month and year did you perform
5 that assignment?

6 A Well, the first or second assignment,
7 ma'am. I was not taking notes of what exactly. I
8 was coming and going. I was just working. And
9 could I add something else? If I had known it would
10 have come to this, I would have written a diary
11 every day.

12 Q While you were working on assignment
13 for Vuzem in the United States, did you write emails
14 to anyone detailing your life in the U.S.?

15 A No.

16 Q Did you write letters to anyone about
17 your life in the United States?

18 A No. Only by phone.

19 Q During a typical workweek at Tesla,
20 how many days did you work?

21 A Seven days.

22 Q And while at Tesla, what were -- what
23 hours did you work in the day, meaning when did you
24 arrive and when did you leave?

25 A We worked 10 to 12 hours every day at

1 Tesla, as well as at Greenville.

2 Q How many hours did you work on
3 Sundays?

4 A 8:00 to 4:00, or sometimes until
5 2:00.

6 Q While you were on assignment in the
7 U.S., did you have a problem with the amount of
8 hours that you were working?

9 A No. It was hard -- it was difficult
10 to take it, but everybody worked those hours and I
11 worked those hours. I couldn't ask to be taken home
12 early or to be brought to work later.

13 Q Let's walk through a normal day for
14 you at Tesla. What time did you wake up?

15 A 5:30. Around 5:30.

16 Q How did you get to the Tesla
17 facility?

18 A Organized transport by Vuzem company.

19 Q Did you drive the van on occasion?

20 A Only once, and then I didn't want to
21 carry my international -- carry an international
22 driver's license anymore. I didn't want to drive
23 anymore.

24 Q Why did you not want to drive
25 anymore?

1 California?

2 A Yes.

3 Q What was the occasion?

4 A So, for example, my colleague Miro
5 Bosnjak, that is first name M-i-r-o, last name
6 B-o-s-n-j-a-k, took me to buy a phone because I
7 couldn't speak English. And then my other colleague
8 called Darko Sincek, that is first name D-a-r-k-o,
9 last name S-i-n-c-e-k, I went to the Catholic church
10 for Easter. So there were some organized excursions
11 to normal places such as these.

12 And another interpreter addition
13 related to the trip to the Catholic church. These
14 people were Croats from Zagorje in Croatia, and they
15 would go to the Catholic church there.

16 COURT REPORTER: I'm sorry, these
17 people were?

18 THE INTERPRETER: Croats, Croatians,
19 from Zagorje, Z-a-g-o-r-j-e.

20 BY MR. BERNAY:

21 Q Besides going to buy a phone and
22 going to church, do you recall any other outings
23 that you took when you were in California with
24 Vuzem?

25 A I know they went to Las Vegas and

1 they had invited me as well, but again, as I said
2 before, my finances.

3 Q When you were working for Vuzem in
4 California, did you ever travel to any sites in the
5 Bay Area for sightseeing?

6 A Maybe. I don't know.

7 THE INTERPRETER: Comment: The
8 witness may not be aware of what the Bay Area stands
9 for.

10 MR. BERNAY: Oh, okay. Thank you.

11 BY MR. BERNAY:

12 Q When you were in California, did you
13 ever go out to see things in San Francisco, like the
14 Golden Gate Bridge or other landmarks?

15 A No. No, again, finances and, you
16 know, my wife at home and my children.

17 Q Do you recall if your colleagues went
18 to places like Los Angeles, California?

19 A Yes, probably.

20 Q Besides Las Vegas and Los Angeles, do
21 you know if your colleagues went on short trips
22 elsewhere?

23 A I don't know that. I don't know.

24 Q How did your colleagues find time to
25 travel to these places?

1 A You would have to ask them that, not
2 me. These were young men.

3 Q But they were also working seven days
4 a week like you?

5 A Yes.

6 Q Is it possible that they received
7 some time off work to take these trips?

8 A Again, I don't know. All I know is
9 that one time I got a few days off while I was at
10 Tesla. This was for Easter. My friends from
11 Sacramento came to pick me up and I had two days
12 off.

13 Q Who -- what are the names of your
14 friends from Sacramento?

15 A So their names are Slovodan
16 Jovanovic. So first name S-l-o-v-o-d-a-n. Last
17 name J-o-v-a-n-n-o-v-i-c. And Senada Jovanovic.
18 First name S-e-n-a-d-a, last name J-o-v-a-n-n-o-v-i-c.

19 Q How do you know the Jovanovics?

20 A We are both from Samac. We were both
21 born in the same place and we grew up together.

22 Q Did either of them work for Vuzem?

23 A No, no.

24 Q Were they living in Sacramento the
25 entire time you were in California?

1 colleagues that were working there and we start
2 working.

3 Q Was there a meeting held before you
4 began working every day?

5 A If the supervisors determined there
6 was need for it. They were the ones who would
7 determine whether there was a need to have a
8 meeting. And if not, then we would start working.
9 If yes, we would have it.

10 Q On average, how many times a week was
11 there a morning meeting?

12 A Well that would depend on the
13 supervisors. Maybe once. Maybe -- it all depended.

14 Q How many breaks did you get during
15 your typical workday?

16 A I had one break at 9:00 a.m. and the
17 duration of 15 minutes. Another break at noon and
18 the duration of 30 minutes. And then another break
19 at 3:00 p.m. and a duration of 15 minutes.

20 Q What would you do on your morning
21 break?

22 A We would have a coffee, we'd go to
23 the bathroom.

24 Q Anything else?

25 A You couldn't really do more in 15

1 A Again, a coffee, a cigarette,
2 bathroom.

3 Q What time would your workday
4 typically end?

5 A Six, seven o'clock in the evening,
6 until we reached the apartment or the house.

7 Q And again, typically after work, what
8 would you do once you returned home?

9 A Sometimes on our way from work we
10 would go grocery shopping, and then at home we
11 would, you know, wash our clothes, wash our outfits.
12 We would cook. We would prepare for the next day.
13 And then it would be night and it would be time to
14 go to sleep.

15 Q Thinking back over all of your
16 assignments for Vuzem in California, did you always
17 have control of your passport?

18 A Did I have control over it?

19 Q Correct.

20 A Yes.

21 Q Did you always have access --

22 A You never give your passport to
23 anyone.

24 Q Did you always have control of your
25 phone?

1 A Yes.

2 Q Were you ever told that you could not
3 leave the apartments where you were staying?

4 A In what sense that I cannot leave?

5 Q Were you ever told by anyone at Vuzem
6 that you could not leave your housing?

7 A No.

8 MR. BERNAY: We've been going an hour
9 so let's stop. I want to give you a chance to relax
10 for a few minutes. Why don't we come back in 15.

11 (Interpreter translates.)

12 THE WITNESS: Okay, thank you.

13 MR. BERNAY: All right, thank you.

14 (A brief recess was had.)

15 MR. BERNAY: We're back on the
16 record.

17 BY MR. BERNAY:

18 Q Mr. Maslic, yesterday you testified
19 about unsafe working conditions that you experienced
20 at Tesla. Do you remember that?

21 A Yes.

22 Q During your first assignment in
23 Tesla, from September until December of 2014, did
24 you experience unsafe working conditions during that
25 period?

1 exact date recorded.

2 Q Tell me what happened.

3 THE INTERPRETER: So interpreter

4 comment, I need to ask for correction.

5 (Interpreter converses with witness.)

6 A So he used the wrong command.

7 Instead of issuing a command to go down, he went up.

8 So he squished me for about a second, and that broke

9 my work helmet and also caused cuts on my head. And

10 then I lost consciousness.

11 Q When you say he used the wrong
12 command, what do you mean? Do you mean that
13 Mr. Varzic misunderstood the direction and ended up
14 hitting you?

15 A I don't know if he had the right
16 tests for this, whether he passed the right
17 certifications. In Slovenia I underwent training
18 for handling this kind of equipment. I don't know
19 if he did.

20 Q What equipment was Mr. Varzic
21 operating at the time?

22 A The cherry picker with the basket.

23 Q And who was giving the commands?

24 A Sasa turned on the command.

25 Q So that I understand, it was not that

1 in the old part of Tesla.

2 Q Do you recall the name of the
3 building you were working at?

4 A No.

5 Q After everyone rushed to your aid,
6 what happened?

7 A So then my supervisor, Aljosa, came.
8 He put me in the car and took me to my housing. And
9 then the director of Vuzem for the U.S., for the
10 United States, also came. They brought me some
11 medication, and they -- this was all happening in my
12 housing. They did not take me to the hospital.

13 Q Did you ask to go to the hospital?

14 A I had to go where I was taken.

15 Q Did you ask to see a doctor?

16 A They didn't take me to see a doctor.

17 Q My question, Mr. Maslic, is did you
18 ask to go to a hospital or see a doctor?

19 A Probably. I don't know. I was in
20 shock. I just wanted to lie down. I don't want to
21 make a mistake in answering you.

22 Q What medication were you given?

23 A Something against pain.

24 Q And you said the director of U.S.
25 Vuzem came. Who was that?

1 couldn't walk.

2 Q The following day you were unable to
3 walk?

4 A No, I could walk. I wasn't immobile,
5 but I was under a lot of pain. I don't know how to
6 express that. I couldn't move my head left to
7 right, up or down, at all.

8 Q How soon after your injury did you
9 return to work?

10 A So I stayed home that day and the day
11 after, and then I went back to work. However, my
12 supervisor gave me the easiest job so that I could
13 be there.

14 Q What were some of the easy jobs that
15 you did following your injury?

16 A For example, one of the jobs was to
17 tighten some screws in metal sheets in the basement.
18 Correction: Metal fencing in the basement. Also
19 cleaning the construction site. Things like this
20 just so I would be there.

21 Q How long did the pain persist after
22 your injury?

23 A Ten to 15 days.

24 Q Did you take any medication for the
25 pain during that period?

1 that this document is in English. Mr. Maslic, my
2 question for you is have you seen this deposition
3 notice previously that I've marked as Exhibit 5?

4 A No.

5 Q I'll stop sharing my screen now.

6 Mr. Maslic, you testified yesterday and today about
7 threats that you received while working for Vuzem.
8 And you identified the threat made by Klemen Vuzem
9 to you, if you left the Greenville site early. Is
10 that correct?

11 A Yes.

12 Q Who else with the Vuzem company
13 threatened you during your time as an employee?

14 A Nobody directly, except for this one.

15 But there were other provocations.

16 Q What were the other provocations?

17 A By threats coming from Josip Liber
18 and Sifet Dizdarevic.

19 Q And what, specifically, are the
20 threats made by Josip Liber?

21 A So not threats, actually, but it was
22 more the case that, if there was a job that required
23 three or four workers, he would have me do that by
24 myself or maybe he would assign two workers on it.
25 It was just mistreatment. There was verbal abuse

1 that I had to work, that I had to earn my -- that I
2 had to make my money, that I had to make money for
3 Vuzem, things like that.

4 Q Who made such verbal abuse? Was that
5 Mr. Liber?

6 A Mr. Liber and Mr. Sifet Dizdarevic.

7 Q And their abuse included statements
8 that you had to work for Vuzem and for money?

9 A Yes. In a very, very ugly way.

10 Q What were these individuals implying
11 when they made those statements to you?

12 A So, for example, when I complained
13 that I don't have a gas mask and I don't have gloves
14 and I don't have a protective suit, they laughed at
15 me, and all I was doing was asking for protective
16 equipment. And Tesla safety saw this because they
17 were passing by. They saw that I did not have a
18 protective suit and that I was not protected.

19 Q This incident that you're
20 remembering, when you asked for protective gear, to
21 the best of your recollection when did it occur?
22 Month and year.

23 A So I can't remember exactly. You can
24 look this up in Tesla papers. It's whenever they
25 were taking away the old pipes. That would be the

1 most appropriate way to find exact date.

2 Q Previously you testified that that
3 was either on your second or third assignment with
4 Tesla. Does that sound correct?

5 A Yes, but I'm not sure, and I can't
6 tell you exactly, and I'm afraid I'll make a
7 mistake.

8 Q Did Josip Liber do or say anything
9 else to you during your time working for Vuzem that
10 you consider to be mistreatment?

11 A Every interaction between him and
12 myself was mistreatment. That was just the kind of
13 person that he was. He was being fed by hurting
14 others.

15 Q And what about Sifet Dizdarevic?
16 What did he do or say to you?

17 A The same. They both did the same.
18 They were friends and they did the same things and
19 they are the same. I experienced the worst
20 humiliations of my life there, but I had to do it
21 for my family and for my pay.

22 Q Did you ever speak with anyone at
23 Tesla who did not work for the Vuzem entities?

24 A No, because I couldn't speak the
25 foreign language.

1 Q Was there anyone on site at Tesla who
2 did not work for Vuzem but who spoke Bosnian,
3 Croatian and/or Serbian?

4 A I don't know. Maybe. Maybe there
5 was such a person but I didn't know about it.

6 Q When you had safety briefings at
7 Tesla, did -- who translated during those briefings?

8 A I don't remember who was translating
9 them. Probably our supervisor. So Aljosa Globelnik
10 speaks really good English as does Mr. Josip Liber.
11 All the supervisors. I don't know if they -- if
12 they engaged somebody else. I don't remember.

13 Q Do you remember an individual who
14 worked for ISM named Maciej or Magic Kandefar?

15 THE INTERPRETER: Interpreting
16 comment: Would you mind spelling that out?

17 MR. BERNAY: Yeah, I think it's
18 M-a-c-i-e-j, and then it's -- don't hold me to this.
19 I think it's K-a-n-d-e-f-a-r.

20 A No, not familiar with the name.

21 Q Okay. How did you come to -- how did
22 you -- well, what happened after your last
23 assignment with Vuzem at Tesla?

24 A So my last assignment in Tesla, it
25 was myself, Darko Sincek; first name D-a-r-k-o, last

1 name S-i-n-c-e-k. And the next person was Dalibor,
2 that is D-a-l-i-b-o-r. And our supervisor was
3 Primoz. That is P-r-i-m-o-z. And Vuzem sent us --
4 and the owner of Vuzem sent the four of us to do
5 repairs. Repairs of our workers' work and other
6 workers' work. And these repairs were on
7 sprinklers, on pipes, on the roof, on the new -- the
8 new fire protection devices. We were also
9 installing some equipment right under the roof.
10 There was an area of maybe half a meter and we were
11 installing some equipment in there while the
12 temperature was 50 to 70 degrees centigrade.

13 So then, to cut the story short, we
14 spent three months there, and at the end we packed
15 up all of our tools, all of our containers and we
16 shipped them off to Volkswagen in America. And
17 during this assignment was the first time that my
18 pain was so strong I couldn't even turn around, so
19 that my supervisor, Primoz, took me to a hospital to
20 get a shot. And I stayed there for about five to
21 six hours, and I received a shot, and then Primoz
22 told me that he paid it with a credit card, the
23 company's credit card, to the tune of \$1800. And
24 that day he returned me to the motel.

25 At that time the four of us were in

1 this motel, and then I also stayed home the next
2 day. So until the end of this assignment then of
3 three months, we stayed there. I packed up -- at
4 the end we packed up all the tools, all the
5 containers, and we sent it off to Volkswagen. So
6 the whole time we were doing fixes on previously
7 done work. Errors that our people made, that the
8 Polish workers made, and also the Hungarian workers.
9 So whatever Tesla reported as not working properly,
10 we fixed.

11 Q To be clear, were there any other
12 Vuzem employees on site during your last assignment
13 besides the four of you?

14 A No, only the four of us were there
15 who were sent to do repairs. We were doing repairs
16 for both ISM and other companies that had issues.

17 Q Besides ISM, what other companies had
18 issues that you had to repair?

19 A I don't know which company was doing
20 what installations. You should ask my supervisor or
21 Tesla because I had no insight into which company
22 was doing what. Because none of the installed
23 pieces state who did the installation.

24 Q And this last assignment of yours,
25 you said it was three months long?

1 A Yes. We were sent only for 20 days
2 but then we ended up staying three months. I
3 believe it was three months.

4 Q And you voluntarily took this
5 assignment?

6 (Interpreter translates.)

7 MR. DRESSER: Objection. Question is
8 ambiguous.

9 Q You can answer.

10 A That was my job, to go on

11 assignments, and I went on assignments. That's how
12 I am feeding my children. This was, in fact, the
13 best assignment I had in Tesla. They were only four
14 of us and we had no issues. Even though this was
15 probably a job that required ten people and there
16 were only four of us working it.

17 Q Do you recall, how long were you
18 waiting in Bosnia for this final assignment?

19 A No, I cannot, but I can tell you once
20 I get my passports. You have the immigration stamps
21 in the passport.

Q Do you recall if this final assignment lasted from February to May 2016?

24 A Yes.

Q When you went to the hospital as part

1 of this last assignment, which hospital did you go
2 to?

3 A I don't know. You would have to ask
4 Primoz, the supervisor. I'm not familiar with the
5 United States. Or you can look at the credit card
6 records of Vuzem to see which hospital was paid in
7 that period that I was there. Easy to find, if
8 necessary. I am not -- I do not know, though. I
9 just know that the shot that I received was paid,
10 \$1,800.

11 Q And you were not required to
12 reimburse the company for that shot. Correct?

13 A No, I was not required.

14 Q Thinking back to the time you were
15 injured by the scissor lift and thinking about this
16 hospital visit, were you ever asked to give or write
17 a statement about what happened to you?

18 (Interpreter translates.)

19 MR. DRESSER: One moment. To the
20 extent that this asks for a statement that you may
21 have provided to me or another lawyer, do not answer
22 that. As to anything else, you're allowed to
23 answer.

24 A I did not.

25 Q What happened after you returned to

1 Bosnia following your last assignment?

2 A After my return home, I could not
3 move. I could not walk. So I contacted my family
4 doctor, Zora Paleznica. First name Z-o-r-a, last
5 name P-a-l-e-z-n-i-c-a. So she gave me a referral
6 to go to the hospital. Samac is a small town so she
7 send me to the hospital in Doboј. That is
8 D-o-b-o-j. The name of the hospital is Sv Luka
9 Apostol. That is S-v, second word L-u-k-a, third
10 word A-p-o-s-t-o-l, to have imaging done on my hips
11 and my spine.

12 So then this is where the imaging was
13 done of my hips. And then when I returned to Samac,
14 I had the CD with the findings, with the medical
15 findings on it, which were then read to me. And
16 then I was given another referral to see an
17 orthopaedic surgeon in Duboј, and this doctor
18 established that there is more damage on my right
19 hip compared to my left hip. And then I reported
20 back to my family doctor, Dr. Zora Paleznica, who
21 opened up sick leave for me in the duration of one
22 month.

23 And then the next day I called
24 Ms. Natalija Kokot in the company to report to her.
25 They were aware about the shot but I reported to her

1 that I had done the imaging and that I was given
2 sick leave. And then she told me to wait for a day
3 or two, until she talked to Mr. Vuzem, and then she
4 would tell me what to do next.

5 MR. DRESSER: I believe you've
6 answered the question. Let Mr. Bernay ask another
7 question, okay?

8 (Interpreter translates.)

9 Q Mr. Maslic, what happened after
10 Natalija spoke with Mr. Vuzem?

11 A Mr. Vuzem ordered me to come to Ptuj,
12 P-t-u-j, to Kalnic Clinic, that's K-a-l-n-i-c, with
13 all of my findings so that the clinic could
14 determine what is going on.

15 Q So did you then travel to the clinic
16 in Ptuj?

17 A Yes.

18 Q And how soon after you returned from
19 California did this occur?

20 A Maximum of seven days. Maximum.

Q At the clinic in Ptuj, which physician did you see?

23 A The owner, Dr. Kalnic.

24 Q And what did Dr. Kalnic do in your
25 meeting? Did he examine you?

1 A So it confirmed what I had said
2 previously in the United States, that I had
3 incredible pain and that I could not handle physical
4 labor, difficult physical labor. So then this paper
5 that I received from Mr. Kalnic, I showed to
6 Mrs. Kokot, who then showed it to Mr. Vuzem.

7 Q And what did receiving a month of
8 sick leave entitle you to?

9 A I was entitled to medical treatment.
10 Operation, if necessary.

11 Q Was the Vuzem company required to pay
12 you your regular salary over this month?

13 A I was actually fired from the Vuzem
14 company 15 days later because I was given sick
15 leave, and this is not something they should have
16 done. So Mr. Kalnic probably consulted with them
17 and told them that I would not be able to go back to
18 the United States, which is why I was fired.

19 Q How do you know you were fired
20 because you received a sick leave finding?

21 (Interpreter translates.)

22 MR. DRESSER: Sasa, I need to say
23 something for an objection for the record.
24 Objection. Question is compound, ambiguous, call
25 for speculation. And it calls for attorney work

1 first. And so I expected medical treatment. My
2 need for treatment was confirmed both by Bosnian
3 doctors, specialists, an orthopaedic surgeon, as
4 well as Slovenian doctors, the owner of the clinic.

5 Q Before you were fired by Vuzem, was
6 your expectation that you would be treated, that you
7 would recover, and that you would then accept more
8 assignments from Vuzem?

9 A Yes. Let me just add, so let me just
10 clarify. So he sent the four of us because we were,
11 quote unquote, excellent at our job, because we were
12 doing repairs. Repairs are very, very difficult to
13 do. So, yes, I expected to continue.

14 Q Do you remain in contact with workers
15 who remained employed with Vuzem since your
16 termination?

17 A Yes, with certain people, I did.
18 With those people who were good people and good
19 workers in the states, yes.

20 Q And did they take additional
21 assignments in the United States with Vuzem after
22 you were terminated?

23 A Yes, yes.

24 Q Where were those assignments?

25 A I didn't ask, but I do know that they

1 A Gentlemen, I had died during the
2 operation in Belgrade, and I was brought back to
3 life. This is all God's gift, the fact that I'm
4 alive now. The operation took five and a half hours
5 but they were able to bring me back. If you would
6 like me, I can unbutton my shirt and show you the
7 cut that I have from here to here (pointing).

8 Q You don't need to show us,
9 Mr. Maslic. I'm sorry you experienced what you did
10 with your health issues, and I'm glad that you are
11 doing better today.

12 A Last night I felt very heavy and
13 uncomfortable because this was the first time that
14 my family heard about the unpleasantness that I had
15 suffered in the United States, because I would have
16 never talked to them about it otherwise.

17 Q What restrictions are you under today
18 because of your health issues?

19 A I simply can't do anything at all.

20 Q Do you have the ability to work at
21 all today?

22 A No, I cannot get the requisite
23 medical or health examination done, and nobody wants
24 to hire me because I cannot walk and I cannot stand.
25 So about a year or two ago some friends of mine did

1 me a favor. They had new trucks, and new trucks
2 that they used to transport gravel, and they only do
3 routes of about 100 kilometers away. So we were
4 able to do this route of 100 kilometers and then
5 come home in the evening. And these are the type of
6 trucks that get filled from another truck and then
7 they get emptied by pushing a button so there's no
8 labor involved. You don't have to do anything. And
9 I think I managed to do this for about two years,
10 maximum, and then I had to stop because I couldn't
11 climb into the truck anymore.

12 And I've held my commercial license
13 for 42 years, and I have categories A, B, C, D, and
14 E. And my driver's license was never suspended or
15 revoked. And I never had an accident. I never had
16 a ticket. And it was never revoked. I am a very
17 quiet, composed and patient person and my
18 temperament is very agreeable. And I'm very sorry
19 that I was in this situation, that I was put into
20 this situation.

21 Q The job driving trucks that you
22 mentioned, what years did you perform that work?

23 A Two years ago. Is that right? Two
24 years ago. You also have this information in my
25 work booklet.

1 A No, I'm not capable to do anything
2 else.

3 Q When are you scheduled to have hip
4 surgery?

5 A I'm waiting for that. I do not still
6 have an appointment because I cannot have the hip
7 surgery within one year of my heart surgery. And I
8 would like to, if I can, if I have the financial
9 means, to buy a higher quality hip, and start with
10 one and then do the other, and then also work on my
11 spine.

12 Q When were you first told that you
13 would need a hip replacement?

14 A The first time I returned from the
15 United States. Correction. The last time I
16 returned from the United States, after I received a
17 shot. I never had any issues up until then.

18 Q And who told you that you needed the
19 hip replacement?

20 A This doctor. She was the orthopaedic
21 surgeon in Doboj who did my x-ray. You also have
22 that in the documentation.

23 Q And did you -- did you attempt to
24 have your hips replaced earlier?

25 A No. I tried to but then COVID